

Abstract

The author of this paper explores a central strand in the complex relationship between Peirce and Kant. He argues, against Kant (especially as reconstructed by Christine Korsgaard), that the practical identity of the self-critical agent who undertakes a Critic of reason (as Peirce insisted upon translating this expression) needs to be conceived in substantive, not purely formal, terms. Thus, insofar as there is a reflexive turn in Peirce, it is quite far from the transcendental turn taken by Immanuel Kant. The identity of the being devoted to redefining the bounds of reason (for the drawing of such bounds is always a historically situated and motivated undertaking) is not that of a disembodied, rational will giving laws to itself. Nor is it that of a being whose passions and especially sentiments are heteronomous determinations of the deliberative agency in question. Rather the identity of this being is that of a somatic, social, and historical agent whose very autonomy not only traces its origin to heteronomy but also ineluctably involves an identification with what, time and again, emerges as other than this agent.

A strong claim is made regarding human identity being practical identity (practical identity being understood here as the singular shape acquired by a human being in the complex course of its practical involvements, its participation in the array of practices in and through which such a being carries out its life). An equally strong claim is made regarding the upshot of Peirce's decisive movement beyond Kant's transcendental project: this movement unquestionably drives toward a compelling account of human agency.

I. Introduction

In his maturity, Charles Peirce came to characterize his cosmology as, in part, "a Schelling-fashioned idealism" (CP 6.102).¹ At this same

Toward a Pragmatic Conception of Practical Identity

VINCENT COLAPIETRO



time, he confessed: "My philosophy resuscitates Hegel, though in a strange costume" (CP I.42). But these were thinkers to whom the complex development of his philosophical reflections led him, not the ones from which he set out. In "Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results" (1898), William James (after suggesting, in reference to "the English-speaking philosophers," "Mr. Peirce has only expressed in the form of an explicit maxim what their sense for reality led them all instinctively to do" [268]) asserted: "The true line of philosophic progress lies . . . not so much *through* Kant as *round* him to the point where we now stand" (269). But where James stood at that moment was due to the influence of Peirce and, in turn, where Peirce stood as a young philosopher engaged in the spirited exchanges of the "Metaphysical Club" was due to having worked *through*, rather than going *around*, Kant. As a mature thinker, Peirce would still insist: The Kantian "has only to abjure from the bottom of his heart the proposition that a thing-in-itself can, however indirectly, be conceived; and then correct the details of Kant's philosophy accordingly, and he will find himself to have become a Critical Common-sensist" (CP 5.452).² For the youthful Peirce, however, no philosopher was more influential than the one whom he called "the King of modern philosophy" (CP I.369).

Peirce unhesitatingly acknowledged his indebtedness to Immanuel Kant.³ It is, consequently, only appropriate that expositors of Peirce have stressed both his youthful enthusiasm for this German predecessor and the enduring imprint of this early influence. Even so, Peirce's relationship to Kant is more complex than most interpreters of this pragmatist seem to appreciate,⁴ not least of all because the most important respects in which Peirce appropriates Kant's critical philosophy are not fully identified by Peirce.⁵ The aim of my paper is to explore a crucial respect in which Peirce's mature pragmatism carries forward, though in a more consistently experimental manner, the central impulse of Kant's critical project. The manner in which Peirce's pragmatism carries forward Kant's project is, however, also the means by which we can mark the eventually unbridgeable gulf between Peirce's experimental approach and Kant's transcendental procedure. In any event, this respect concerns nothing less than the reflexive stance at the heart of the Kantian project, a stance no less obvious in the inaugural volume of Kant's critical project (the work Peirce insisted upon calling the *Critic of Pure Reason*) than in his critique of "practical" (or moral) philosophy. Kant's philosophy merits the adjective *critical* largely by virtue of the systematic manner in which he takes a reflexive stance toward epistemic, ethical, and aesthetic judgments.⁶ In brief, his critical philosophy is critical mainly by virtue of this stance.

Christine Korsgaard is a contemporary philosopher deeply influenced by Kant who carefully argues for the reflexive stance as the least problematic source of our most truly authoritative norms. In *The Sources of Normativity*, she makes a painstaking case for what she calls "reflective endorsement," presenting such endorsement as the most effective way in which rational agents can resolve normative conflicts of various kinds. She sharply contrasts this

position with normative (or axiological) realism, the view that norms are grounded in features of the world existing independently of the exercise of our rationality. Moreover, Korsgaard takes “reflective endorsement” in its most viable form to be broadly Kantian. This position in *this* form (in contrast to its Humean variant) grants an “authority to reflection” in reference to our passions, emotions, sentiments, dispositions, and temperaments.⁷

The authority of reflection, as defended by Korsgaard, is helpful in enabling us to grasp Peirce’s distinctive approach to the constitutive entanglement of rational agents in normative conflicts (to be rational *is* to be caught up in these conflicts). In other words, Korsgaard presents a portrait of Kant useful for any interpreter of Peirce, especially any interpreter who is concerned to identify what the *mature* Peirce owes to the Kantian project. I will, accordingly, use her depiction of Kant as an aid in crafting my own portrait of Peirce.

My immediate aim is to attain a firmer grasp of Peircean pragmatism, especially in conjunction with the interwoven topics of rational agency and normative conflicts. My ultimate objective is, however, is to sketch (however quickly and thus roughly) a convincing portrait of rational agency. Such a portrait must, following the lead of Peirce, make more central than does Kant, even on Korsgaard’s interpretation, the insights of realism⁸ and sentimentalism. Above all else, anyone articulating such an account must highlight the constitutive role of certain human sentiments (the “logical sentiments” of faith, hope, and love being dramatic examples of this) in such cognitive endeavors as experimental investigation, moral deliberation, and political debate. The reason for characterizing these sentiments as *constitutive* is because (as Peirce insists) they make up the substance of the self. In other words, we are constituted as recognizably human selves (or subjects), mainly, through the operations of legisigns of such sentiments and emotions (David Savan 1981, 323).⁹ Put yet otherwise, certain *affective* dispositions are constitutive of rational agency: apart from such dispositions, such agency is unintelligible (cf. Hookway 2000, chapter 9). This is so even if the manner in which the Kantian endorses or acknowledges the authority of reflection precludes the recognition (the re-cognition) of such constitutive sentiments. Indeed, Peirce diverges from Kant and his more orthodox followers precisely at this point. Reflective agents are for him not trans-empirical selves but practically identifiable, thus historically implicated, actors. That is, practical identity in a substantive sense is a matter from which such agents cannot actually distance themselves. The practical identity of experimental inquirers—the identity of those “flesh-and-blood” agents who carry out experiments, if only in imagination,¹⁰ and moreover who have *deliberately* formed their character through an identification with this practice of inquiry (see e.g., CP 5.411; also in EP 2: 331–32; CP 6.604)—is no purely formal identity, but a substantive affair. The punctual self of the Cartesian tradition, even in its disguised form as the transcendental subject of the Kantian project, is truly a ghost to be exorcised. The historically extended and implicated self of the pragmatist tradition is,

despite its finitude and fallibility, capable of learning from experience. Indeed, such a self is capable of learning from experience *because* of its limitations and errors. Such a self learns through the acknowledgment of its finitude and the confession of its mistakes (confession here being itself a form of acknowledgment).¹¹ The identity and individuality of such a self are illusory to a degree hardly ever acknowledged by this self,¹² but they are sufficiently real to be not only an experientially identifiable locus of error and ignorance but also an experimentally animated form of intelligence or ingenuity.¹³ Since "science is not the whole of life" (CP 5.537), since the practical identity of the experimental inquirer is, even in the case of the most passionate, committed experimentalist, but a single facet of any human identity, the practical identity of even the most thoroughgoing experimentalist is rooted in and continuously sustained by its tangled involvements in an irreducibly plural array of historical practices. Human identity is practical identity, whereas practical identity is the singular shape acquired by a human being in the complex course of its practical involvements.

II

Not at present to know anything whatsoever, thus not to have learned anything from experience up to this point, is perhaps more intimately connected to not being able to learn anything in the future than we are likely to realize. In any event, not to know anything (actually to be a skeptic) would possibly be endurable if it did not underwrite (or appear to underwrite) the fate of being forever unable to come to know anything from this moment forward. Insofar as skepticism drives inquiry, it is healthy and beneficial; insofar as it undermines the hope of discovering what we do not yet know, it is diseased and debilitating.¹⁴ Thus, Peirce's fallibilism is to be sharply distinguished from skepticism. But his anti-skeptical stance does not imply the presumption of either possessing a demonstrative refutation of skepticism or a demonstrative proof of realism.¹⁵ Early on Peirce noted: "It has often been argued that absolute scepticism is self-contradictory; but this is a mistake" (W 2: 242; also in CP 5.318). Even if it were not a mistake, it would nonetheless be inefficacious: by such an argument, "it would be impossible to move such a man [as the absolute skeptic], for his scepticism consists in considering every argument and never deciding upon its validity." Whether or not such a person is willing to acknowledge their reliance upon inference, and beyond this, the implications of this reliance, however, "there are," in Peirce's judgment, "no such beings as absolute skeptics": "though there are inanimate objects without beliefs [not likely none without habits or dispositions], there may be no intelligent beings in that condition." Intelligence in this context implies inference (or illation)¹⁶ and, in turn, inference implies both the possession and formation of beliefs (understood pragmatically, i.e., understood as habits). The point is not to construct a knockdown argument but to frame a bottom-up acknowledgment in which finite, fallible, and arguably fallen¹⁷ agents secure the conditions in which they are alone able to learn from experience.

In *On Certainty* and elsewhere, Ludwig Wittgenstein contends: “Knowledge is based in the end on acknowledgment” (#378). In different yet overlapping ways, Peirce and Wittgenstein address the normative conflicts and crises inevitably confronting rational agents by acknowledging that to which we as rational *human* agents are always already committed, because these factors are the ones in and through which we as human agents are formed and transformed, the very ones making such conflicts and crises so lacerating (cf. Joas 2001, chapters 7 & 8). More exactly, these authors challenge their readers and indeed themselves to acknowledge nothing less than this. In contrast to the transcendental subject endorsed by Kantian philosophy, however, the rational human agent *acknowledged* by Peirce and Wittgenstein is a historical actor—a somatic, social, and semiotic subject only identifiable in reference to an extended family of human practices and, as a consequence of involvement in such practices, a being equipped with recognizable human responses. Knowing how to act, or what to believe, or even what to forebear¹⁸ requires such agents to acknowledge not only who they are but also the concrete historical circumstances (thus, the *specific* normative conflicts) in which action, belief (or knowledge), forbearance, and much else become deeply problematic. Agents committed to such acknowledgment resist the temptation of taking a transcendental turn; they also fight against the impulse to secure indubitable foundations (cf. Korsgaard). The drive toward acknowledgment bids us to go back to the “rough ground” of human history where normative conflicts are inevitable but resolvable (to the extent that they are) in the only manner practically important (i.e., humanly significant) for human agents (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, I, #107; see also Scheman). The manner in which such conflicts are resolved is, more often than not, one encompassing a redescription of the terms by which such conflicts are identified and characterized, also a re-narration of various aspects of these normative conflicts. The Kantian form of reflective endorsement is, thus, radically transformed by Peirce into a *pragmatist form of reflective acknowledgement* (one manifesting at least a distant kinship with the Wittgensteinian form of reflective acknowledgement).

Such acknowledgment is one with the ongoing, self-consciously historical task of owning up to the enabling constraints of human rationality. The authority of reflection, as it actually operates in the context of inquiry and other human practices, enforces a reflection on the guises of authority, not least of all the historically influential guise of transcendental reason. From Peirce’s perspective, this is in truth a *disguise*, so thoroughly a disguise that experimental intelligence fails in this instance to recognize itself in its actual character. Peircean pragmatism is, hence, nothing less than the philosophical acknowledgement of experimental intelligence in its most radical implications. At the center of this acknowledgement, we encounter “an experimenter of flesh and blood”—that is, an embodied agent exemplifying experimental intelligence (“What Pragmatism Is” [1905], CP 5.424). This pragmatism is, at once, an attempt to carry forward the central impulse of

Kant's critical project and a radical modification of that project. Unless interpreters of Peirce acknowledge this, they miss the significance of his pragmatism. In appreciating this significance, however, we are in the position to attain not only a deeper understanding of Peirce and his relationship to Kant but also a fuller comprehension of our rational agency.

III

In *The Sources of Normativity*, Christine Korsgaard asserts:

Normative concepts exist because human beings have normative problems. And we have normative problems because we are self-conscious rational animals, capable of reflection about what we ought to believe or to do.¹⁹ (p. 46)

In the end, she identifies the resource for offering a compelling account of the reflective stance with the source of such problems themselves (the source of the ineluctable normative conflicts with which human agents, especially in the modern epoch, are confronted), this (re)source being nothing other than our reflective nature.

Korsgaard appropriately stresses, "the normative question is one that arises in the heat of action. It is *as agents* that we must do what we are obligated to do, and it is [also] *as agents* that we demand to know why" (91; emphasis added). This stress aligns her with not only Kant but also Peirce. Her very next step however signals her fundamental allegiance with Kant and her crucial difference from Peirce: "So it is not [as Hume and others argue it is] just our dispositions, but rather the particular motives and impulses that spring from them, that must seem to us to be normative" (ibid.). In fact, it turns out not to be our dispositions at all but a purely formal test devised and used by the rational will that provides (on Korsgaard's account) the ultimate source of our most truly authoritative norms.

She concedes that the *practical identity* of human agents (since such agents are identifiable with the formal exercise of nothing other than their rational will) is, in one sense, empty. But she insists this identity is, in another sense, not at all empty. Practical identity *is*, on this account, formal (insofar as it abstracts from the contingent and determinate impulses, inclinations, and emotions of the agents in question) and, being formal, it is "in one sense empty" (103). But there is a self-conscious identification with a self-imposed law that allegedly saves practical identity from being completely empty. For Korsgaard emphatically asserts: "The reflective structure of human consciousness requires that you identify yourself with some law or principle which will govern your choices. It requires you to be a law to yourself" (103–104). This self-imposed requirement is nothing less than "the source of normativity" (104). Moreover, the identity secured by this identification²⁰ is somehow not an utterly empty conception of practical identity.

In his criticism of Korsgaard on this topic, Raymond Geuss argues that the Kantian position being defended by Korsgaard requires *a more robust con-*

ception of practical identity than either Kant or Korsgaard offer, or possibly could offer, within the limits of their projects.²¹ Geuss pointedly remarks: “Korsgaard’s project of recentering Kant around notions of identity seems to me to push him [Kant] toward a position in which it will be difficult for the Kantian to reply” to a line of criticism put forth by Friedrich Schlegel in the 1790s (I92). “Who I am” is far from exhausted by the self’s capacity to identify with a universal law. Of greater salience here, the project of identifying with this capacity engenders an impulse toward dissociation. This impulse is so strong as to distance the self from the law. This distancing is enacted by the self. That is, the “I” consciously (in a sense, deliberately) keeps the law distant from itself “treating it ironically” and “precisely not identifying with it.” The unsettling implications of this for the Kantian conception of practical identity cannot be exaggerated. If Schlegel is correct, then my identity is far more the result of my capacity to dissociate myself from the law than that of my will to identify with the law. This identity is one with “my continuing ability to distance myself in thought and action from any general [or universal] law” (I92), also presumably any other prior identification.

The particulars of this criticism do not so much concern us as its general point regarding the systematic need to address the critical question of the practical identity of human agents. Peirce’s pragmatic and thus naturalistic alternative to Kant’s transcendental and (as I will suggest near the conclusion of this paper) Cartesian position involves acknowledging our practical identity in a more direct manner and also more robust form than anything found in either Kant or Korsgaard.²²

IV

The very attempt to highlight the connection between Kant and Peirce in the manner I have suggested, however, seems to be ruled out by straightforward textual evidence, especially when this connection is taken to concern the reflexive stance of *practical* reason in the distinctively Kantian sense. Indeed, there are passages in Peirce where he appears to be utterly at odds with the reflexive stance at the heart of Kant’s critical philosophy. Perhaps the most famous of these, one bearing directly upon the distinctive employment of human reason wherein the reflexive turn is most dramatically present (“practical” or ethical reason), is a text in which Peirce appears to identify moral conduct with *unreflective* conformity to traditional morality:

To be a moral man is to obey the traditional maxims of your community *without hesitation or discussion*. Hence, ethics, which is reasoning out an explanation of morality, is—I will not say immoral, [for] that would be going too far—composed of the very substance of immorality (CP I.666; emphasis added).

This text is to be found in the first lecture (“Philosophy & the Conduct of Life”) in a series entitled “Detached Ideas on Vitally Important Topics.”

The background to this series of lectures is helpful in appreciating the degree to which Peirce is being hyperbolic and ironic at pivotal points in the entire series, but especially in the inaugural lecture. In an attempt to advise Peirce about what would be most appropriate for the series James was trying to arrange for his friend, James wrote:

I am sorry you are sticking so to formal logic. I know our graduate school here, and so does Royce, and we both agree that there are only three men who could possibly follow your graphs and [logic of] relatives. Are not such highly abstract and mathematically conceived things to be read rather than heard; and ought you not, at the cost of originality, remembering that a *lecture* must succeed as such, to give a very minimum of formal logic and get on to metaphysics, psychology and cosmogony almost immediately? (Perry, II, 418).

He went on to advise his slightly older friend:

Now be a good boy and think a more popular plan out. I don't want the audience to dwindle to three or four, and I don't see how one can help that on the program you propose. I don't insist on an audience of more than fifteen or sixteen, but you ought certainly to aim at that, and that does n't condemn you to be wishy-washy.

So James proposed to Peirce: "You are teeming with ideas, and the lectures need not by any means form a continuous whole. Separate topics of a vitally important character would do perfectly well" (Perry, II, 419). In his private response, Peirce informed James: "My philosophy . . . is not an 'idea' with which I 'brim over'; it is serious research to which there is no royal road; and the part of it which is most closely connected with formal logic is by far the easiest and least intricate" (*ibid.*). Even so, he begrudgingly accepted the counsel of his friend: "I will begin again, and will endeavor to write out some of the 'ideas' with which I am supposed to be 'teeming' on 'separate topics of vital importance.' I feel I shall not do well, because in spite of myself I shall betray my sentiments about such 'ideas'; but being paid to do it, I will do it as well as I possibly can" (419–20). In the public discourse, one of the places where Peirce betrayed just such sentiments is near the end of the first lecture:

Among vitally important truths there is one which I verily believe—and which men of infinitely deeper insight than mine have believed—to be solely supremely important. It is that vitally important facts are of all truths the veriest trifles. For the only vitally important matter is *my* concern, business, and duty—or yours. Now you and I—what are we? Mere cells of the social organism. Our deepest sentiment pronounces the verdict of our own insignificance. Psychological analysis shows that there is nothing which distinguishes my personal identity except my faults and my

limitations—of if you please, my blind will, which it is my highest endeavor to annihilate [or overcome]. (CP I.673)²³

One of the most illuminating texts in Peirce's corpus for understanding how the annihilation of this will (the merely idiosyncratic will of the supposedly separate self) is to be accomplished is found in his review of Ernst Mach's *The Science of Mechanics: A Critical & Historical Exposition of Its Principles* (a review appearing in *The Nation* in 1893). Here he notes:

Having once surrendered to the power of nature, and having allowed the futile ego in some measure to dissolve [or be annihilated], man at once finds himself in synectic union with the circumambient non-ego, and partakes in its triumphs. On the simple condition of obedience to the laws of nature, he can satisfy many of his selfish desires; a further surrender will bring him the higher delight of realizing to some extent his ideas; and a still further surrender confers on him the function of cooperating with nature and the course of things to grow [or, at least, to assist in the growth of] new ideas and institutions. Almost anybody will admit there is truth in this; the question is [only] how fundamental that truth may be. (CN I, 188–89)²⁴

From the Peircean perspective, then, the moral person is the deliberative agent, one who conscientiously engages in discussion and deliberation not about the foundations of morality but about the ethical dimensions inherent in actual circumstances. In turn, a deliberative agent is one guided and goaded by various ideals having a decisive hold on the actual character of the agent in question. "Every man has," Peirce insists, "certain ideals of the general description of conduct that befits a rational animal in his particular station in life, what most accords with his total nature and relations" (CP I.591). To abstract from this station and nature, these relations and entanglements, transforms our moral identity into a formal and, arguably, empty one. To dissociate our selves in some respect, for some purpose, from one or more facets of any of these is, however, not only legitimate but also (on occasion) imperative.

V.

The hold of such ideals is the result of the way ideals ordinarily and properly establish their authority over the deliberations of agents. The way they do so involves nothing less than the constitution of agency: the *incorporation* of ideals, primarily in the form of more or less integrated habits, makes of the human organism a human agent. What Peirce means by the *soul* (*psyche*) is simply a natural being endowed with the remarkable capacity to acquire and lose habits, inherently "general determinations of conduct" (including affective and imaginative determinations, i.e., dispositions to feel in certain ways in certain circumstances and also to imagine along certain lines.²⁵ Habit is, indeed, that which unites matter and mind, thus precluding an

ontological dualism between absolutely separate modes of being.²⁶ By virtue of the ideals inscribed and re-inscribed in the psyche, inclinations of self-approval and self-disgust are integrated into the conduct of human agents. Approval and disapproval tend not to be “mere idle praise or blame”; indeed, they almost certainly “will bear fruit in the future.” For whether human agents are satisfied or dissatisfied with themselves, approving or disapproving of what they have actually done or even simply felt, becomes absorbed by their “nature” or *psyche* “like a sponge.”²⁷ Such absorption practically means that these agents will strive to do better in the future.

Peirce identifies three “ways in which ideals usually recommend themselves and justly do so.” First, “certain kinds of conduct, when the man contemplates them, have an esthetic quality. He thinks that conduct fine.” Second, persons endeavor to make their ideals consistent with one another, inconsistency being odious to human beings since it is an impediment to the exercise of their agency. Third, individuals imagine what the consequences of fully carrying out what their ideals would be—and then question the esthetic quality of these imagined consequences (CP I.591).

The ideals actually animating agents have their roots in ones largely imbibed in the childhood of these agents. Even so, these ideals are gradually shaped to the personal nature and the reigning ideas in the social spheres of individual agents; this is accomplished more “by a continuous process of growth than by any distinct acts of thought.” “Reflecting upon these ideals, he [the agent] is led,” Peirce suggests, “to *intend* to make his own conduct conform at least to part of them—to that part in which he thoroughly believes” (CP I.592). But just as agents shape their conduct to accord with their ideals, they shape their ideals themselves to accord with their aesthetic susceptibility to the inherently admirable (or fine). In sum, the moral person is the truly deliberative agent and, in turn, deliberative agency encompasses a conscientiously cultivated sensibility: “If conduct is to be thoroughly deliberative, the ideal must be a habit of feeling which has grown up under the influence of [ordinarily] a [long] course of self-criticisms and of hetero-criticisms.” The *deliberate* formation of such affective habits—these habits being the shape in which ideals are maximally effective in deliberation—is an integral part of deliberative agency (CP I.574).

In the ongoing formation of such habits and the everyday exercise of our agency, the reflexive stance of human beings toward various dimensions of their actual lives is clearly in evidence. This stance depends not so much on universalizability as on *generalizability* and, moreover, on generalizability in the service of continuity.²⁸ Or so Peirce proclaims near the conclusion of the lecture in which he in a hyperbolic and ironic manner says, “To be a moral man is to obey the traditional maxims of your community without hesitation or discussion” (CP I.666). One’s highest business is to recognize a higher business than one’s own. The practical realization of this higher vocation generates “a *generalized conception of duty* which completes your personality by melting it into the neighboring parts of the universal cosmos” (emphasis

added). Here we are at any rate confronted with “the supreme commandment of the Buddhisto-Christian religion”—the commandment “to generalize, to complete the whole system even until continuity results and the distinct individuals weld together” (CP I.673). The reflexive stance at the heart of this deliberative process is, however, not primarily a cognitive accomplishment: “the very supreme commandment of sentiment is that man should generalize” and the work of such generalization manifests “what true reasoning consists in” (CP I.673). But this commandment does not thereby “reinstale reasoning” or cognition as paramount. The reason is that the form of generalization in question “should come about, not merely in man’s cognitions, which are but the superficial film of his being, but objectively in the deepest emotional springs of his life” (CP I.673).²⁹ An accurate understanding of this supreme commandment marks “duty at its proper finite figure” (CP I.675; however, cf. CP 8.262).³⁰ The accent on finitude is as critical as the emphasis on generalizability.

A word specifically about pragmatism is in order here. According to Peirce’s articulation of this doctrine, “the true meaning of any product of the intellect lies in whatever unitary determination it would impart to practical conduct under any and every conceivable circumstance, supposing such conduct to be *guided by reflexion carried to an ultimate limit*” (CP 6.490, emphasis added; cf. Hookway 302). In a letter to F. C. S. Schiller (September 10, 1906), Peirce explained: “By ‘practical’ I mean apt to affect conduct; and by conduct, voluntary action that is self-controlled, i.e., controlled by adequate deliberation” (CP 8.322). The meaning of *practical* in this context is whatever bears upon conduct (perhaps most of all, upon our comportment as participants in some identifiable human practice), insofar as conduct through deliberation is alterable.

VI

What could be more Kantian than, in one’s effort to vindicate reason (cf. O’Neill), to establish the authority of reflection, stressing *the limits of reason*, indeed, the rather narrow bounds within which human rationality can operate effectively? What also could be more Kantian than to underscore the link between rationality and reflexivity, in particular, the capacity of reason to restrain itself, to control its operations by appeal to norms and ideals themselves having won reflective endorsement? But what could be more Hegelian than to rescue such reflective endorsement from being an empty formalism by appealing to the actual, ongoing history in which the norms, ideals, and indeed motives for such endorsement have taken authoritative shape? Closely allied to this, what could be more Hegelian than to accord *passion* an eliminable and indeed central role in the constitution of reason itself? Also what could be more Hegelian than to acknowledge reflectively the paradox of autonomy, the extent to which mastery over the self involves a series of surrenders to what is other than the self? Since these surrenders to what is other than the self involve acts of identification with what is other, the

achievement of autonomy involves, both at the outset and at every step along the way, the *incorporation* of others and thereby the transformation of the self.

I am able to give laws to myself only to the extent that I give myself to others (even more radically, only to the extent that I am always already given over to others and, as a consequence of this, given to myself not only by others but also in terms inherited and authorized by these others). This is, at least, partly what I mean by the *paradox of autonomy*. The roots of autonomy are to be traced to heteronomy (Butler 1997, chapter 1). Moreover, the dramatic crises in the lives and engagements of autonomous agents (including crises in engagements such as the historical life of an experimental community, i.e., an open-ended community of self-critical inquirers) are bound up with the fateful necessity of disowning parts of oneself and incorporating others in oneself (MacIntyre). Elsewhere I have gestured toward these crises as integral to *dramas of self-correction* (Colapietro 2004b). The fateful character of these decisive dramas (decisive above all because the actions and decisions of agents so significantly, so profoundly, define these agents and their engagements) is brought to light by recalling one of Hegel's guiding concerns. In the Preface to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel asserts: "We learn by experience that we meant something other than we meant to mean; and this correction of our meaning compels our knowing to go back to the proposition [our formulation of what we meant to mean], and [to] understand it [this proposition] in some other way" (Miller trans., p. 39). In brief, experience compels us to *go back* to confront what we meant to mean in order that we can *go forward*. Such compulsion, felt as (to use one of Peirce's favored expressions in this regard) *force majeure* (see, e.g., CP 5.581), is exerted upon agents as a result of their exertions and conceptions.³¹ Existence "is not a form to be conceived, but a compulsive force to be experienced" (CN III, 37).

Hegel offers pivotal insights into, and a vivid sketch, of the communal processes by which autonomous individuals come into self-possession, to the degree they ever do. Central in this sketch is his emphasis on the extent that in giving myself to what is other than me I am willing to be made other than myself. The "I" emerges out of the "We." At critical junctures in its precarious development, the human self secures and solidifies its effective (or practical) identity by affective identifications with others in their otherness, who thereby become incorporated (principally in the form of habits) in the very constitution of the "I."

The "I" as "I," i.e., as a form of agency distinguished by the degree to which its exercise involves reflexivity, is a social being whose reflexivity is inseparable from its sociality, moreover, one whose autonomy is intertwined with heteronomy. The self as a *divided being* is one who, in its status as self, confronts itself as other.³² In addition, the self precisely as an *autonomous being* is one who, in the very exercise of its autonomy, confronts the directives, challenges, and criticisms of others as though they provisionally have an authority comparable to anything issuing from the self (see, e.g., CP

5.378). Autonomy on this account turns out to be a function of the incorporation and transformation of heteronomy. But the processes of incorporating and transforming laws felt by the self to be, in significant measure, externally imposed are ongoing: there is no point at which heteronomy is completely transcended. The continuous appeal to what is other than the self, including the self as other to itself, is a defining feature of Peircean autonomy.

I am, however, confronted by an irony in my effort to forge a connection between Peirce and Hegel on just this point. For Peirce seems to have missed this facet of Hegel's account. He goes so far as to say: "Hegel is anxious not to allow any 'foreign considerations' to intervene in the struggle which ensues" between a conceptual framework and the phenomena with which that framework is concerned. Peirce endeavors to be fair to Hegel here, admitting "I cannot see that it would conflict with the spirit of the general method to allow suggestions from experience." But the suggestions from experience are permissible only to the extent they "would be inevitable"; and Peirce interprets this to mean, only to the extent they "would be within the grasp of the thought which for the moment occupies the theatre" presumably of consciousness (CP 2.32). Hegel's is, however, preoccupied with experience insofar as it reconfigures present thought—insofar as it forces us to acknowledge that "we meant something other than we meant to mean." Peirce himself seems begrudgingly to acknowledge this, but it is hard (if not impossible) to resist the conclusion that here Peirce is still at this point (1902) ambivalent toward Hegel. While granting along with Hegel an authority to the "history of thought" (CP 2.32), Peirce feels inclined in the end to decline from allowing "any weight to such flummery" (CP 2.34). It is hard to imagine a more profound thinker more profoundly misunderstanding another profound thinker and therein missing the deep affinity between himself and this other thinker. But, in my judgment, this is exactly what we witness here.

Let us turn back directly to Peirce, in particular, to his account of autonomy or self-control. The ideal of self-control is, for him, "inseparably linked to that of self-criticism. "Now control," Peirce stresses, "may itself be controlled, criticism itself subjected to criticism; and ideally there is no obvious limit to the sequence" (CP 5.442). In an unpublished manuscript, he suggests: "if any criticism is beyond criticism (which may be doubted) it is the criticism of criticism itself" (MS 598, p. 5). In its most embryonic (or nuclear) sense (that sense wherein the nucleolus or nucleus of rationality is identified), rationality as concretely felt in any process of genuine reasoning is at the very least "a sense of taking a habit, or disposition to respond to a given stimulus in a given kind of way" (CP 5.440). "But the secret of rational consciousness is not so much to be sought in the study of this one peculiar nucleolus, as [it is to be sought] in the review of *the process of self-control in its entirety*" (CP 5.440; emphasis added). The consideration of this process in its entirety extends to the deliberate cultivation of affective

dispositions: when *fully conceived*, the ideal of self-control (an ideal evident in the conscientious adoption of a critical stance toward our epistemic, ethical, and aesthetic judgments) needs to be traced to its actual governance of human conduct. When traced to its operation in this context, what we discover is that the *ultimate source of human normativity* is (at least, for Peirce) the esthetically motivated cultivation of esthetically governing affections.

This is no doubt a far distance from Kant's more austere rendering of the critical stance, on Korsgaard or anyone else's interpretation. What however could be more Kantian than to offer an architectonic critique of experimental reason in which the *limits of reason* are stressed as much as the efficacy and dignity of reason? To be sure, Peirce interprets the finite character of human rationality in explicitly Darwinian (at least, evolutionary) terms, not in formally transcendental terms. In a manuscript on pragmatism, he reveals,

I hold . . . that man is so completely hemmed in by the bounds of his possible practical experience, his mind is so restricted to being the instrument of his needs, that he cannot, in the least, *mean* anything that transcends those limits. (CP 5.536)

Peirce's stress on finitude here is, at once, a sign of his kinship with Kant and (given the naturalistic motive for emphasizing this particular point in this particular manner) his distance from the figure whom he dubbed "the King of modern thought" (CP I.369).

Peirce's characterization of human agents being completely inscribed within the bounds of practical experience does not limit human rationality to being nothing but an instrument of human needs, least of all *given* needs (those we just happen to feel an urgency to satisfy). Historically emergent desires come to attain the status of needs and, in addition, historically evolved and evolving practices such as the experimental investigations of those devoted to *theoretical* truth come to define purposes transcending given biological needs or even regnant human desires. But the achievement or approximation of these transcendent purposes (purposes transcending any given biological or cultural inheritance) relies utterly on a reason incapable of transcending the somewhat narrow bounds of "possible practical experience." A practically bounded intelligence can evolve to the point where its commitment to what might be called transcendent purposes becomes a defining trait of such intelligence.

Hence, precisely the place at which Peirce so clearly joins Kant is the place where he so decisively moves away from the critical perspective allegedly provided only by Kant's innovative conjunction of empirical realism and transcendental idealism. For Peirce no less than for Kant, the limits of our understanding are defined by the limits of our experience. Peirce insists, however, "a proposition which has no relation whatever to experience is devoid of all meaning" (7.566). In his hands, this claim is not wielded as a weapon of positivism by which to slay the champions of metaphysics,

ethics, aesthetics, and religion. Either the thing-in-itself is related to experience in a different sense than that permitted by Kant's transcendental idealism (in a more intimate and direct sense than Kant would allow) or it is "devoid of all meaning." Insofar as the thing-in-itself is defined as transcending the possibility of experience, it is, for Peirce, meaningless: to be unknowable in this way is to be inconceivable. Insofar as it is defined as part of a practically instituted and maintained distinction between how things happen to appear to us and how they are apart from the idiosyncratic structure of one or another species of cognitive agents, this dangerously misleading expression might be given a pragmatic meaning. A sense of finitude is here conjoined to an acknowledgment of our capacity for self-transcendence and self-transformation.

To repeat, what could be more Kantian than offering a *Critic*³³ of reason in which defining the limits of reason is of paramount concern? Also what could be more Kantian than defining these limits in terms of experience? But what could be more Hegelian than bringing into sharp focus the *historical* character of human experience and, as a salient feature of such experience in its historicity, the self-transcending and self-transformative momentum inherent in our experientially rooted practices and indeed in the course of our lives? Much keeps us stuck; much thwarts and arrests the inherent drive of human experience toward self-transcendence and self-transformation. Perhaps Peirce is too sanguine when he asserts experience will in time break down even the most pigheaded and passionate person who has sworn to hold to a proposition the force of experience is destined to discredit (his example is the spherical shape of our planetary abode). (Cf. CP 7.78; 7.281).

For Peirce, then, reason operates within the bounds of "possible practical experience." The *experiential* sense of these bounds is defined—and redefined—in reference to our actual historical experience. Our actual experience (at least) intimates the possibility of experiential transformations and (quite often) compels us to confront that what we mean to mean cannot be advanced by tenaciously espousing what we *meant* to mean. Our practical identity, even insofar as it encompasses a defining commitment to reflective endorsement, is at once a historical inheritance and a historical attainment. The authority of reflection is nothing other than the authority of historically situated, and hence practically implicated, agents who respond to the experiential compulsions inherent in their own practical involvements (though *theoretical* inquiry might be here counted as one such "practical" involvement).³⁴ This takes the authority of reflection to be the authority of history, though the possibilities of misunderstanding this assertion are numerous and ubiquitous. Such authority is first and foremost a task, the task of owning up more fully to the complex inheritances in which the practical identity of any human agent is inevitably rooted. Above all else, this task demands of agents the necessity of *acknowledging*, in the first instance, their indebtedness to these inheritances and, in decisive moments thereafter, their ongoing need to incorporate in their habits, methods, and

self-understanding their ineradicable ambivalence toward the fateful developments giving authoritative shape to these historical practices. We *learn by experience* that “we meant something other than we meant to mean.” That is, you and I, as practically identified by our involvement in some actual historical (or intergenerational) community, come by experience to learn this. Wittgenstein’s insights into the connection between knowledge and acknowledgment might accordingly be adapted to our purpose. In the first instance, we (you and I and potentially countless others who are ineluctably defined in and through their involvement in certain practices) are compelled by experience to acknowledge our indebtedness to one or another of our inheritances, for our practical identity is bound up with this historical inheritance. In decisive moments thereafter, we are also compelled by the momentum of experience to incorporate the lessons of experience into the habits of our being (Colapietro 1988). We can do so begrudgingly or otherwise (e.g., graciously or gratefully).

The authority of reflective endorsement carries force and possesses substance as the result of practical identification with the experientially sanctioned beliefs of various historical communities. Practical identity itself only results from such practical identification. The practical identity of autonomous agent, in the very exercise of their reflexive commitments (their commitments to self-consciousness, self-criticism, and self-control), is at bottom the historical achievement of fissured individuals who are continuously struggling, consciously or otherwise, to bear effective witness to the fateful crises of their defining histories.

In his later years, Peirce became increasingly appreciative of just how eloquent and insightful was Hegel’s project, precisely as an attempt to bear self-conscious witness to our self-transformative histories. (The role of such a witness becomes, partly because of the impact of Hegel’s work, integral to the dynamics of self-transformation.) Unquestionably, Peirce’s early philosophy took memorable form as an *immanent* critique of the Kantian project. But his mature philosophy assumed equally memorable form by transforming Kant’s project along some of the lines already articulated in Hegel’s writings. One of these lines was a thoroughly historicist rendering of human experience. Another was a resolute refusal to sever thought and being³⁵ (and, closely allied to this refusal, an equally resolute refusal to disjoin appearance and reality, self and other, autonomy and heteronomy). The appeal to experience is an experientially and, thus, a historically motivated and sanctioned appeal in which the self-imposed limitations constitutive of human rationality³⁶ alone hold out hope of the self-transformative possibilities intimated by human experience.

The identity of thought and being is, in Peirce’s own thought, not so much the grounding claim of speculative philosophy (the task of reflection insofar as it merits, in Hegel’s judgment, the name *philosophy*) as one of the defining commitments of his experimental approach.

Over against any cognition, there is an unknown but knowable reality; but over against all possible cognition, there is only the self-contradictory. In short, *cognizability* (in its widest sense) and *being* are not merely metaphysically the same, but are synonymous terms. (CP 5.257).

However limited and deformed is the actual shape of human rationality—however much it is forced to acknowledge as a consequence of its own exercise its inherent limitations and inherited disfigurements—such rationality is compelled by its own defining commitment to the fateful crises generated by our historical experience (e.g., the unavoidable drama of self-correction) to *acknowledge* its kinship to being (in addition, its kinship to nature). To postmodern ears, the affirmation of such kinship cannot help but sound like the fantastic utterance of a speculative mind operating apart from the guidance of experience (however, see Eco). But, to some of us who have devoted our selves to the study of Peirce, especially those who have undertaken this study in light of those historical figures in reference to whom Peirce characterized his philosophical project, we hear an inspiring acknowledgment of an ancient “truth.” This ancient claim is inflected in such a way as to express clearly the experimental temper of our historical moment. But the acknowledgment of *this* kinship carries with it the invitation to acknowledge a degree of kinship between contemporary theory and ancient *theoria*.

To some extent, we can say with Aristotle that the phenomena relevant to any inquiry include the *logoi* of our predecessors and contemporaries, our modes of discourse and forms of articulation. Not only is being said in many ways, but the various ways in which it has been articulated are potentially manifestations of nothing less than being itself.³⁷ Our modes of speech might be more than simply a patchwork of conventions indicative of local contingencies and arbitrary associations. The contingent features of various natural languages certainly need to be identified, but the arguably universal—at least, the indefinitely generalizable—facets of any human language, such as indexical signs, equally need to be acknowledged (Nöth).

We must therefore attend to how things manifest themselves not only in our perceptual experience but also in various forms of human articulation, not least of all poetic and philosophic utterance (Colapietro 2004a). Our utterances are, in however attenuated and disguised a form, interpretants of dynamical objects complexly mediated by intersecting histories of various human practices. The realization of this has prompted some thinkers to dream of the possibility of transcending mediation entirely. It has disposed other thinkers (most notably, Immanuel Kant) to acknowledge the inescapability of mediation, but then in effect to deny the refractive power of semiotic mediation in particular (i.e., the power of signs to exhibit what is radically other than them). It is as though the rainbow is taken to be solely indicative of the properties of water, not in the least those of light (Thompson).

But the realization under consideration has inclined yet other thinkers (ones such as Hegel, Peirce, Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Umberto Eco) to conceive the historicity of semiosis neither as a prison to be escaped or a definitively bounded perspective. We are caught up in histories not of our own initiation, ones over which we can exert at most very limited control. But the exercise and enhancement of self-control, such control being for Peirce the very center of rationality, depend upon acknowledging our indebtedness to and locus in these histories. The open-ended task of self-critical interpreters is, accordingly, one with *acknowledging* the finite, fallible, and implicated character of human endeavor, while at the same time being animated by the *hope* of carrying forward the precarious work of an intergenerational community.

The formalist dreams so captivating to the philosophical imagination are transcendental illusions (and, in this regard, transcendental idealism is itself to be counted among these transcendental illusions). The human hopes born of—and indeed borne by—the human histories in and through which our practical identities have been formed and transformed are not necessarily such illusions, at least when tempered by contrite fallibilism.

VII Conclusion

In “Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results,” the lecture in which William James so effectively accomplished what Peirce two decades before failed to do—launch pragmatism as a movement—he suggests (as we noted at the outset): “The true line of philosophical pragmatism lies . . . not so much *through* Kant as *round* him to the point where now we stand” (269). But where James stood at that moment was a place prepared by Peirce. That place was however one reached (again, as we stressed above) by Peirce going originally *through* and ultimately *beyond* Kant. One dimension of the trajectory of Peirce’s thought is his movement *through* the tangled intricacies of the first *Kritik*. In addition to the creative appropriation of distinctively Kantian doctrines such as the priority of logic to metaphysics (cf. Murphey) and the ineliminable role of conceptual mediation even in our most rudimentary perceptual experience, Peirce appears to have taken from Kant the ideal of a deliberately reflexive and thus interrogative stance toward one’s given desires, emotions, and beliefs. In *The Sources of Normativity*, Christine Korsgaard offers a painstaking account of the sort of reflective endorsement required for a rational resolution of normative conflicts. Such conflicts are inevitably generated by the exercise of reflexivity. They can be most satisfactorily resolved, she contends, only by making the source of the conflicts itself a resource for their resolution. But *the identity of the agent* effectively (i.e., practically) resolved to take a reflexive, critical stance toward its desires, emotions, and beliefs cannot be secured by the purely formal identification of an essentially “punctual self” (to use Charles Taylor’s expression) with an utterly abstract law.

The identity of agents *is* secured, strengthened, and altered by means of the complex identifications by which somatic actors *incorporate* within them-

selves, principally through the process of habituation, the rules, norms, and ideals constitutive of this or that historical practice. Our practical identities are forged in the crucible of our practical involvements, involvements ineluctably insuring (in however tenuous and conflicted a form) identifications. The deliberately reflexive stance definitive of human agency is, accordingly, the historical achievement of embodied beings. This is not a contingent fact about human rationality. It is an inescapable condition for acquiring any distinctively human capacity. The *acknowledgment* of this condition is required for the fuller possession of rationality or any other capacity. Such acknowledgment however prompts our awareness that the self-legislative agent is anything but a self-generated being. The traditions in which we were reared and, as a result of this, the sentiments making up the substance of our psyches are so much a part of our practical identity that whatever reflective distance we can attain regarding these traditions and sentiments inevitably—and deeply—draws upon what we are striving, if only reflectively, to distance our selves from. Insofar as the critical stance is conceived by Kant and Korsgaard as resulting from the formal exercise of a purely punctual self (one defined in radical opposition to its actual habits and hence habitual attachments and affections, entanglements and identifications), rather than resulting from (at bottom) the affective dispositions of the human animal, the reflexive stance is the inexplicable accomplishment of an all too familiar and all too ethereal subject—the Cartesian *cogito*. But, insofar as this stance is the *dramatic* accomplishment of a historical actor prompted by, and addressed to, the fateful contingencies of an ongoing history,³⁸ we have decisively broken with the illusory aspirations of both Descartes' foundationalist project and Kant's transcendental turn.³⁹ Fully acknowledging our animality and historicity does not render inexplicable this reflexive stance; rather such acknowledgment alone renders this stance intelligible and practical.⁴⁰ For this acknowledgment brings into focus the extent to which the relationship of the self to itself is complexly related to its attachments to, and identifications with, others; also the extent to which “thoroughly deliberate” conduct depends on a deliberately cultivated sensibility (CP I.574), a sensibility thereby rendered ever more finely and fully attuned to the attractions of what would show itself to be *intrinsically admirable*.⁴¹ The intrinsically admirable would most reliably, least deceptively, show itself to be so only to “reflexion carried to an ultimate limit” (CP 6.490).

Peirce suggests, “the good is the attractive,—not to everybody, but to the sufficiently matured agent; and the evil is the repulsive to the same” (EP 2, 379). The sufficiently mature person is the agent who is especially skilled in discerning the beauty of character because that person has taken deliberate pains in becoming responsive to the character of beauty. Indeed, we find in our susceptibility to the lure of ideals the deepest root of such maturity. Moreover, this susceptibility governs whatever reflective stance we ever manage to achieve. It is at the heart of our *real* selves; better, it is the heart of these selves. “When I speak of a man's Real Self, or true nature,” Peirce

informs us, "I mean the very springs of action in him which mean how he would *act*, not, when in haste, but after due consideration; and by due consideration, I mean such deliberation as shall give him time to develop, to grow up to his proper Manhood, which many a man never does actually attain in this world, scarce any of us fully" (MS 649, pp. 36–37; cf. Krolkowski). For the conscientiously deliberative agent, these springs of action are not simply given; they are in no slight measure that agent's self-cultivated susceptibility to the lure of the intrinsically admirable (or adorable).

Such a view is unquestionably sentimental. From a Peircean perspective, however, this should not prompt reasonable persons to condemn this view, but rather to espouse it. Such persons unhesitatingly acknowledge the extent to which this susceptibility in its affectively charged and dynamically orienting form defines, more than anything else does, their practical identity. In the writings of Charles Peirce, we discern a decided movement toward a truly pragmatic acknowledgement of this practical identity, a movement at once indicative of his debt to Kant and his radical departure from transcendental philosophy.⁴² In addition, it is a turn toward embodiment, history, and sociality, without being a reductive materialism, historical relativism, or uncritical communitarianism. Finally, this movement drives toward bringing into sharp focus a compelling account of human agency.

The Pennsylvania State University
vxc5@psu.edu

REFERENCES

- Allison, Henry E. 1990. *Kant's Theory of Freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, Douglas R. 2005. "The esthetic attitude of abduction" in *Semiotica*, volume 153, 3/4, 9–22.
- Beiser, Frederick C., ed. 1993. *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bernstein, Richard J. 1981. "Toward a More Rational Community" in *Proceedings of the Charles S. Peirce Bicentennial International Congress*, ed. K. L. Ketner, 115–20. Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech Press.
- . 1991. "The Lure of the Ideal" in *Peirce & Law*, ed. Roberta Kevelson, 29–43. NY: Peter Lang.
- Brent, Joseph. 1996. *Charles Sanders Peirce: A Life* [Revised & Expanded Edition]. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Cavell, Stanley. 1989. *This New Yet Unapproachable America: Lectures after Emerson after Wittgenstein*. Albuquerque, NM: Living Batch Press.
- . 1990. *Conditions Handsome & Unhandsome: The Constitution of Emersonian Perfectionism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1998. "What's the Use of Calling Emerson a Pragmatist?" *Revival of Pragmatism*, edited by Morris Dickstein. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

- Christensen, C. B. 1994. "Peirce's Transformation of Kant." *The Review of Metaphysics* [September], 48, 91–120.
- Carlson, Thomas. "James and the Kantian Tradition." *The Cambridge Companion to William James*, edited by Ruth Anna Putnam, 363–83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Colapietro, Vincent. 1988. "Human Agency: The Habits of Our Being." *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, volume XXVI, number 2, 153–68.
- . 1997. "The Dynamical Object & the Deliberative Subject" in *The Rule of Reason: The Philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Jacqueline Brunning & Paul Forster, 262–88. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- . 2003. "The Space of Signs: C. S. Peirce's Critique of Psychologism" in *Philosophy, Psychology, & Psychologism*, ed. Dale Jacquette (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers), 157–79.
- . 2004a. "The Routes of Significance: Reflections on Peirce's Theory of Interpretants" in *Cognitio* [São Paulo], v. 5, n. 1, 11–27.
- . 2004b. "Portrait of an historicist: an alternative reading of Peircean semiotic" in *Semiotiche*, 2/04 [maggio], 49–68.
- . 2004c. "Striving to Speak in a Human Voice: A Peircean Contribution to Metaphysical Discourse." *The Review of Metaphysics*, volume 58, 367–98.
- Deleuze, Gilles. 1999. *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tamilson & Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Dewey, John. 1988 [1922]. *Human Nature & Conduct* [Volume 14 of *The Middle Works of John Dewey*]. Carbondale, IL: SIU Press. Cited as *MW 14*.
- Eco, Umberto. 2000. *Kant & the Platypus: Essays on Language & Cognition*, trans. Alastair McEwen. London: Vintage.
- Esposito, Joseph L. 1980. *Evolutionary Metaphysics: The Development of Peirce's Theory of Categories*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.
- Fisch, Max H. 1986. *Peirce, Semiotic, & Pragmatism*, edited by Kenneth Laine Ketner & Christian J. W. Kloesel. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Geuss, Raymond. "Morality & Identity" in *The Sources of Normativity*, ed. Onora O'Neill, 189–99.
- Guyer, Paul. 1992. "Thought and being: Hegel's critique of Kant's critical philosophy" in Beiser (ed.), 171–210.
- Guyer, Paul, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hegel, G. W. F. 1973. *Logic: Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1830), trans. William Wallace. Clarendon: Oxford University Press.
- . 1981. *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hookway, Christopher. 2000. *Truth, Rationality, & Pragmatism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- James, William. 1977. *The Writings of William James: A Comprehensive Edition*, ed. John J. McDermott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Joas, Hans. 2000. *The Genesis of Values*, trans Gregory Moore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kant, Immanuel. 1965. *The Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith. NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Korsgaard, Christine. 1996. *The Sources of Normativity*, ed. Onora O'Neill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Krolikowski, Walter P. 1964. "The Peircean *Vir*" in *Studies in the Philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce* [Second Series], ed. Edward C. Moore & Richard S. Robin, 257–70. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- McDowell, John. 1994. *Mind & World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Midtgarden, Torjus. 2005. "Peirce's Epistemology & Its Kantian Legacy: Exegesis & Systematic Considerations." Forthcoming in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*.
- Misak, Cheryl. 1994. "Pragmatism and the Transcendental Turn in Truth & Ethics." *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, vol. XXX, no. 4, 739–75.
- Murphey, Murray G. 1968. "Kant's Children: The Cambridge Pragmatists" in *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* [Winter], volume IV, number 1, 3–33.
- . 1993. *The Development of Peirce's Philosophy* [2nd Edition]. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Oehler, Klaus. 1987. "Is a Transcendental Foundation of Semiotics Possible?" *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* [Winter], XXIII, 1, 45–63.
- O'Neill, Onora. "Vindicating Reason" in Guyer (ed.), 280–308.
- Peirce, C. S. 1931–1958. *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne & Paul Weiss. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1931–1958.
- . 1975–79. *Contributions to the Nation*, volumes I–3, ed. Kenneth Laine Ketner & James Edward Cook. Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University Press.
- . 1982. *Writings of Charles S. Peirce: A Chronological Edition*, ed. Peirce Edition Project. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. Cited as *W 1*.
- . 1992. *The Essential Peirce*, volume 1, ed. Christian J. W. Kloesel & Nathan Houser. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. Cited as *EP 1*.
- . 1998. *The Essential Peirce*, volume 2, ed. Peirce Edition Project. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. Cited as *EP 2*.
- Perry, Ralph Barton. 1935. *The Thought and Character of William James*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.
- Rorty, Richard. 1982. *Consequences of Pragmatism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Savan, David. 1981. "Peirce's Semiotic Theory of Emotion" in *Proceedings of the Charles S. Peirce Bicentennial International Congress*, ed. K. L. Ketner, 319–33. Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech Press.
- . 1987–88. *An Introduction to C. S. Peirce's Full System of Semeiotic*. Toronto: Monograph series of Toronto Semiotic Circle, no. 1.
- Scheman, Naomi. 1996. "'Forms of Life: Mapping the rough ground.'" *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*, edited by Hans Sluga and David G. Stern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schiller, Friedrich. 1965. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*, trans. Reginald Snell. NY: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co.
- Schneewind, J. B. "Autonomy, obligation, and virtue: An overview of Kant's moral philosophy" in Guyer (ed.), 309ff.
- Short, T. L. 2000. "Was Peirce a Weak Foundationalist?" *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* [Fall], XXXVI, 4, 503–28.
- . 2002. "Robin on Perception and Sentiment in Peirce." *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, [Winter/Spring], XXXVIII, 1/2, 267–82.
- . 2004. "The Development of Peirce's Theory of Signs" in *The Cambridge Companion to Peirce*, ed. Cheryl Misak. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, John E. 1971. "Being, Immediacy, & Articulation." *The Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 24, no. 4, 593–613,

- . 1973. "Hegel's Critique of Kant." *The Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 23, no. 2, 438–60.
- . 1992. *America's Philosophical Vision*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Taylor, Charles. 1989. *The Sources of the Self*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- . 1995. "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments." *Philosophical Arguments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Thompson, Manley. 1983. "Things in Themselves." *Proceedings & Addresses of the APA* (September), vol. 57, no. 1, 33–48.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. 1953. *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe. NY: Macmillan Co.
- . 1972. *On Certainty*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe & G. H. von Wright. NY: Harper & Row.

NOTES

1. This paper was presented, in part, as my Presidential Address to the Charles S. Peirce Society on 28 December 2005 in New York. Time permitted me to read only a portion of this essay. At points, this paper runs parallel to one presented in Milan, Italy, on April 6, 2005, under a different title ("Reflective Acknowledgment and Practical Identity").

2. "The truth is," Peirce noted in "What Pragmatism Is" (the first essay in the series in *The Monist* in which the essay quoted in the body of my text, "Issues of Pragmaticism," is the second), "that pragmatism is closely allied to the Hegelian absolute idealism, from which, however, it is sundered by its vigorous denial that the third category (which Hegel degrades to a mere stage of thinking) suffices to make the world, or is even so much as self-sufficient" (CP 5.436).

3. In an autobiographical remark, Peirce claimed: "The first strictly philosophical books that I read were of the classical German school; and I became so deeply imbued with their ways of thinking that I have never been able to disabuse myself of them." As a youth (after first studying Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters*), he "devoted two hours a day to the study of Kant's *Critic of the Pure Reason* for more than three years." As a result of such focused, sustained study Peirce boasted: "I almost knew the whole book by heart, and had critically examined every section of it" (CP 1.4). Tracing the ancestry of the pragmatic position to the meetings of the Metaphysical Club, Peirce recalled: "Wright, James, and I were men of science. . . . The type of our thought was decidedly British. I, alone of our number, had come upon the threshing floor of philosophy through the doorway of Kant, and even my ideas were acquiring [in the context of these interlocutors] the English accent" (CP 5.12).

4. Christopher Hookway also stresses "Peirce's complex relations to Kant." He rightly notes that Peirce "saw himself as a broadly Kantian philosopher, who wanted to correct Kant's logic and improve on his system of categories. This makes it unsurprising that he would be interested in hunting down the presuppositions of logic. . . . In spite of this, however, he wanted to reject the transcendental method: showing that something was a presupposition of logic was no guarantee of its truth." Peirce also rejected the idea of an a priori derivation of philosophical or other concepts; against Kant, he insisted that philosophy had to be experiential and, thus, "scientific" in a broad sense (37). Finally, he repudiated the central Kantian notion of a thing-in-itself ("The *Ding an sich* . . . can neither be indicated nor found" [CP 5.525]; "The Kantist has only

to abjure from the bottom of his heart the proposition that a thing-in-itself can, however indirectly, be conceived; and then correct the details of Kant's doctrine accordingly, and he will find himself to have become a Critical Common-sensist"—and a less confused pragmatist! "Kant (whom I *more* than admire) is nothing but a confused pragmatist" (CP 5.525). Cf. Thompson.

5. Closely connected to this is the way in which Peirce came to Kant. Before turning to Kant's first *Kritik*, he studied intensely with a youthful companion Friedrich Schiller's *Aesthetische Briefe* (Brent; Esposito, 11–13). In turning to Kant's work, he was guided by his father Benjamin Peirce's imposing example of uncompromising critic. In the *Aesthetische Briefe*. . . Schiller was writing," Joseph Esposito notes, "in response to the predicament of philosophy produced by Kant's *Critique*. And in spite of his claim that it was upon Kant's principles that his position in the letters was based, Schiller was in fact involved in an effort to undermine completely the subjective approach of the *Critique*. By postulating two coexisting tendencies—the *sensuous* drive toward the finite, particular, and temporal, and the *formal* drive toward the infinite, universal, and eternal—and by offering a historical/genetic analysis of the relation of philosophic thought to culture, he was undercutting the privileged position of Sensibility and denying the very possibility of a truly transcendental philosophy" (12). Peirce's mature philosophy might be read as a return to the animating impulses of Schiller's aesthetic philosophy. Just as his initial encounter with Kant was mediated by his intense study of Schiller, so his eventual return to something akin to Schiller's philosophical project was mediated by this encounter. Moreover, Peirce's reading of Kant's first *Kritik* was mediated by his father's example of how to subject even the most carefully constructed arguments to uncompromising criticism: "When in my teens I was first reading the masterpieces of Kant, Hobbes, and other great thinkers, my father, who as a mathematician, and who, if not an analyst of thought [i.e., not a logician in Charles' sense], at least never failed to draw the correct conclusion from given premises, unless by a mere slip, would induce me to repeat to him the demonstrations of the philosophers, and in a very few words would usually rip them up and show them empty. In that way, the bad habits of thinking that would otherwise have been indelibly impressed upon me by those mighty powers, were, I hope, in some measure, overcome. Certainly, I believe the best thing for a fledgling philosopher is a close companionship with a stalwart practical reasoner" (CP 3.405). Peirce does not seem aware of the possibility that the disposition to rip arguments up "in a very few words" might itself be a bad habit, one his own youthful self was in the abstract at least disposed to condemn. Reflecting on the traditional maxim *Errare est hominis*, Peirce in 1860 (i.e., at the age of twenty-one) wrote: "This reflection should teach us the inhumanity of a polemic spirit and should teach us still to revere a great man notwithstanding his mistakes" (W I: 5). In any event, Peirce's early encounter with Kant's critical philosophy was complexly mediated and, in addition, the enduring imprint of, and eventual deviations from, this early influence bears the marks of this complex mediation. Peirce's relationship to his own thoughts was, as a result of his relationship with his father and indeed countless others, mediated by a *critical stance* having the concrete form of a set of deeply ingrained habits to interrogate and criticize along the lines exemplified by these others and modified by the course of experience.

6. See John E. Smith, *America's Philosophical Vision* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), Chapter 5 ("The Reflexive Turn, the Linguistic Turn, and the Pragmatic Outcome").

7. The effective capacity to take and maintain such a reflective stance is, from a Peircean perspective, a *passionate* affair in which the irreducibly personal investment in,

and thus identification with, a deliberately cultivated sensibility is the communal achievement of embodied agents bound together by shared commitments and mutual affections. Such a stance is, hence, decidedly not the merely formal exercise of a purely reflective power, especially when what Charles Taylor calls the “punctual self” is presumed to be a sufficiently robust agent to exercise this power. A more robust conception of the human self, thus of human agency, than the transcendental subject of Kant’s critical philosophy is required for the exercise of the capacity in question. We need to *acknowledge* nothing less, but also nothing more, than the human animal dramatically transformed by its thorough immersion in the social life, the cultural practices, of other human animals.

8. In “Robin on Perception and Sentiment in Peirce,” T. L. Short highlights one of the most central features of this when he asserts: The “question of norms is wholly factual,” since “this question concerns not what we *do* believe, accept, or desire, but what we *would* believe, accept, or desire after all relevant experience has been sifted.” He adds: “What we *really* desire is not what we think we desire, or do now desire, but what we would desire after having had experience of various possible objects of desire and after having had time calmly to reflect on those experiences” (277; emphasis added). “Such facts are,” Short contends, “facts purely, yet they have normative force” (277). But they are facts *for a deliberative agent* defined by certain commitments, passions, and sentiments. That such commitments, passions, and sentiments *ought* to define the character of such agents is, however, at once purely factual and irreducibly deliberative. That is, the emphasis on realism ought not to eclipse the central role of deliberative agency.

9. In his illuminating exposition of Peirce’s semiotic account of human emotions, David Savan suggests, “every emotion has certain lawlike features, and these cannot be represented by a sinsign. First, an emotion has a pattern unrolling over a period of time. Joy [for example] rises and falls, becomes more intense and fades. . . . Second, an emotion is general, and exists only through its instances. . . . Third is Peirce’s repeated thesis that what can be fitted into a system of explanation must have at least some of the characteristics of a law. But emotions do enter into the systematic explanation of behavior. Further, emotions can be justified, shown to be inappropriate, disproportionately strong or weak, and so on. It is clear, I think, that [on the basis of such considerations] an emotion is a legisign. Like any legisign, it exists through its instances or replicas. Each such replica is an iconic sinsign” (1981, 323). Later in this essay, Savan draws a crucial distinction: “Beyond the natural and moral emotions [fear being an example of the former and remorse an instance of the latter] there is a third class, not of emotions but of sentiments. Our twentieth century has almost lost the sense of the distinction between the emotions and the sentiments. The sentiments are enduring and ordered systems of emotions, attached either to a person, an institution, or, in Peirce’s case [and that of countless other disciplined inquirers], a method. Love is the prime example of a sentiment” in the sense intended here (331).

10. “There is,” Peirce acknowledged, “an immense distinction between the Inward and the Outward truth.” But he insisted: “I know them alike by experimentation only.” Not only is the distinction between these two domains an experimentally drawn one, but also these domains themselves are sites of experimentation. The distinction “lies in this, that I can glut myself with experiments in the one case, while I find it most troublesome to obtain any that are satisfactory in the other. Over the Inward, I have considerable control [though not absolute or unlimited power], over the outward very little. It is a question of degree only. Phenomena that inward force puts together appear *similar*; phenomena that outward force puts together appear *contiguous*” (CP 4.87). In a line

of thought traceable to Kant, Peirce stressed, in reference to mathematics, the construction of diagrams: the process of constructing diagrams and observing the consequences flowing from our constructions is truly a form of experimentation (even if it takes place solely in the imagination, i.e., even if it is nothing more than an “imaginative” or “mental experimentation”). There is, not infrequently, in conjunction with such experimentation “the surprising novelty of many deductive discoveries” (CP 4.91). For the centrality of imagination more generally, see my *Peirce's Approach to the Self* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1989), chapter 5.

11. Peirce once confessed: “out of a contrite fallibilism, combined with a high faith in the reality of knowledge, and an intense desire to find things out, all my philosophy has always seemed to me to grow . . .” (CP 1.14). Apart from “the confession that we do not already know” (CP 8, p. 282) the arduous work of genuine inquiry would unlikely be undertaken: “just as it is not the self-righteous man who brings multitudes to a sense of sin, but the man who is most deeply conscious that he is himself a sinner, and it is only by a sense of sin that men can escape its thralldom; so it is not the man, who thinks he knows it all [cf. CP 7.105], that can bring other men to feel their need of learning, and it is only a deep sense that one is miserably ignorant that can spur one on in the toilsome path of learning” (CP 5.583). Such passages make it clear that Peircean fallibilism is aptly christened *contrite* fallibilism.

12. The absolute certainty of the conscious self, especially when conceived as a unified, transparent subject, is, from Peirce's perspective, an illusion about an illusion. “Nothing is,” he insists, “‘inconceivable’ to a man who sets seriously about the conceiving of it [cf. CP. 2.29]. There are those who believe in their own existence, because its opposite is inconceivable; yet the most balsamic of all the sweets of sweet philosophy is the lesson that personal existence is an illusion and a practical joke. Those that have loved themselves and not their neighbors will find themselves April fools when the great April opens the truth that neither selves nor neighborselves were anything more than vicinities; while the love they would not entertain was the essence of every scent” (CP 4.69; cf. 6. 355). For this reason, Peirce elsewhere calls this orientation the “metaphysics of wickedness” (CP 7.571).

13. I am indebted to Larry Hickman for stressing the importance of the Deweyan distinction between the empirical (or experiential) and the experimental.

14. Peirce is explicit about this: “I applaud scepticism with all my heart, provided it have four qualities: first, that it be sincere and real doubt; second, that it be aggressive; third, that it push inquiry; and fourth, that it stand ready to acknowledge what it now doubts, as soon as the doubted element comes clearly to light. To be angry with sceptics, who, whether they are aware of it or not, are the best friends of spiritual truth, is a manifest sign that the angry person is himself infected with scepticism—not, however, of the innocent and wholesome kind that tries to bring truth to light, but of the mendacious, clandestine, disguised, and conservative variety that is afraid of truth, although truth merely means the way to attain one's purposes. If the sceptics think that any account can be given of the phenomena of the universe while they leave Meaning out of account, by all means let them go ahead and try to do it. It is a most laudable and wholesome enterprise” (CP 1.344).

15. See T. L. Short, “Was Peirce a Weak Foundationalist?” in *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* (Fall 2000), XXXVI, 4, 524.

16. The “purpose of signs—which is the purpose of thought [all thought being in signs]—is,” Peirce suggests, “to bring truth to expression. The law under which a sign must be true is the law of inference; and the signs of a scientific intelligence must, above

all other conditions, be such as to lend themselves to inference. Hence, the illative relation is the primary and paramount semiotic relation" (CP 2.444, note 1). Imagine a form of intelligence stripped of any power of intuition and introspection, a form utterly depended upon inadequate information and flawed methods. The very emergence of such a form of intelligence in the course of evolution is itself testimony to the power of inference to devise ever more refined and effective methods of self-corrective inquiry.

17. Peirce was disposed to interpret certain tendencies of the human psyche as evidence of fallenness or depravity (i.e., our "sinfulness"). Though Michael Raposa and Douglas Anderson have done much to bring the religious dimension of Peirce's philosophical project into sharp focus, this dimension is too often (to use a distinctively Peircean term) pooh-poohed. But the thrust of his thought is clear, if not palatable to many of his expositors: Humans are, in Peirce's judgment, fallen as well as finite and fallible beings, blind to their own blindness (6.560) and proud of their perversities. One of the passages in which Peirce most forcefully makes this point bears directly on our central topic (meanings afoot apart from our investitures or interpretations: "ideas utterly despised and frowned upon have an inherent power of working their way to the governance of the world, at last. True, they cannot do this without machinery, without supporters, without facts; but the ideas somehow manage to grow their machinery, and their supporters, and their facts, and to render the machinery, the supporters, and the facts strong. As intellectual development proceeds, we all come to believe in this more or less. Most of us, such is the depravity of the human heart, look askance at the notion that ideas have any power; although that some power they have we cannot but admit. The present work, on the other hand, will maintain the extreme position that every general idea has more or less power of working itself out into fact; some more so, some less so. Some ideas, the harder and more mechanical ones, actualize themselves first in the macrocosm; and the mind of man receives them by submitting to the teachings of nature. Other ideas, the more spiritual and moral ones, actualize themselves first in the human heart, and pass to the material world through the agency of man. Whether all this be true or not, it must at any rate be admitted by every candid man that he does believe firmly and without doubt that to some extent phenomena are regular, that is, are governed by general ideas; and so far as they are so, they are capable of prediction by reasoning" (2.149). See Douglas Anderson, "Peirce's Common Sense Marriage of Religion and Science" in *The Cambridge Companion to Peirce*, ed. Cheryl Misak (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004, especially pp. 185–89).

18. In his critique of pragmatism, in particular, of Dewey's instrumentalism, Stanley Cavell in "What's the Use of Calling Emerson a Pragmatist?" and elsewhere makes much of forbearance. Far more than James or Dewey, Peirce's pragmatism deliberately refrains from making doing or action "the Be-all and the End-all of life" (EP 2: 341; also in CP 5.429)

19. She notes, "normativity is a problem for human beings *because* of our reflective nature. Even if we are inclined to believe that an action is right and even if we are motivated by that fact, it is always possible for us to call our beliefs and motives into question. This is why, after all, we seek a philosophical foundation for ethics in the first place" (49; emphasis added). But the quest for such a foundation is what drives us outside of our bodies and histories. Peirce's "conservative sentimentalism" (see, e.g. CP 1.661) might be taken as a deliberately endorsed alternative to Kant's transcendental turn, a turn animated as much as anything else by the desperate search for an apodictically certain foundation of human judgments in the various spheres of its proper exercise. Such a sentimentalism bids us to *acknowledge* our own moral, mutable bodies (and

thus our animality), also our intersecting, internalized histories. These bodies and histories provide a stable enough basis for our self-corrective procedures and practices. Accordingly, the demand for self-warranting or self-certifying cognitions or judgments to serve as a foundation is exposed as unnecessary and, indeed, even worse than unhelpful, since it is one of the main roots from which the transcendentalist illusion grows.

20. One might quibble with Korsgaard here. The reflective structure of human consciousness does not require one to identify ultimately with some law or principle but rather with our very capacity to identify with a law or principle of a certain character (this character being nothing other than that of being self-imposed or self-espoused). This makes the identity of the agent intrinsically reflexive, for it involves identifying with our capacity for identifying itself with the universalized demands of truly legislative authority.

21. Geuss acknowledges his debt to Martin Heidegger in developing this specific criticism: "In his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* he [Kant] claims that the interest of reason is exhausted when one has given answers to the three questions: 'What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope?' As Heidegger pointed out . . . Kant adds to these three the fourth question: 'What is the human being?' The question: 'Who am I?' doesn't appear [in Kant], as if it were obvious that the correct answer is: 'A human being'; that is, [in Kant] . . . as if the questions 'Who am I?' and 'What am I?' were philosophically not properly distinct" (191). The question of the practical identity of any human agent, in its immediately existential form, is not answered by identifying the biological species to which the being belongs. Self-identity, thus both self-identification as a humanly grounded capacity and self-identifications as densely sedimented habits, possesses particular salience to this pressing but neglected question.

22. In fairness to Korsgaard, she attempts to answer the objection posed by Geuss. Suffice it to say here that I find her response as unconvincing as I find the position itself cogent.

23. This point can be stated positively. Peirce himself does so when he asserts: "we know that man is not whole as long as he is single, that he is essentially a possible member of society. Especially, one man's experience is nothing, if it stands alone. If he sees what others [in principle] cannot, we call it hallucination. It is not 'my' experience, but 'our' experience that has to be thought of; and this 'us' has indefinite possibilities" (CP 5.402, n. 2).

24. This important text invites to be coordinated with other important ones. First, the "synectic union with the circumambient non-ego" calls to mind Peirce's definition of religion: "In each individual it is a sort of sentiment, or obscure perception, a deep recognition of a something in the circumambient All, which, if he strives to express it, will clothe itself in forms more or less extravagant, more or less accidental, but ever acknowledging the first and the last, the _ and _ as well as a relation to that Absolute of the individual's self, as a relative being" (CP 6.429). The emphasis on the growth of ideas and institutions calls to mind a passage from "Evolutionary Love: "Suppose, for example, that I have an idea that interests me. It is my creation. It is my creature; for . . . it is a little person. I love it; and I will sink myself in perfecting it. It is not by dealing out cold justice to the circle of my ideas that I can make them grow, but by cherishing and tending them as I would the flowers in my garden" (CP 6.289). Somewhat paradoxically, this series of ever more radical self-surrenders makes possible the acquisition of ever more effective self-control. The progressive annihilation of the blind will of aggressive and possessive individuality is the negative side of the progressive realization of rational agency. Peirce highlights an important facet of the positive side of this pro-

gressive realization when he suggests: "it is by the indefinite replication of self-control upon self-control that [to borrow a term from Henry James, Sr.] the *vir* is begotten, and by action, through thought, he [this *vir*] grows an esthetic ideal, not for the behoof of his own poor noodle merely, but as the share which God permits him to have in the work of creation" (CP 5.402, n. 3). "This [esthetic] ideal, by modifying the rules of self-control modifies action, and so experience too—both the man's own and that of others, and this centrifugal movement thus rebounds in a new centripetal movement," without limit (*ibid.*). "The great principle of logic is self-surrender, which does not mean that the self is to lay low for the sake of an ultimate triumph. It may turn out so; but that must not be the governing purpose" (CP 5.402, n. 2). The governing purpose must rather be ever more thoroughgoing devotion to (or espousal of) a trans-personal cause or ideal. Cf. Krolkowski; also Bernstein 1991.

25. "The sense of effort is," Peirce asserts in MS 283 ("The Basis of Pragmatism"), "the sense of an opposing resistance then and there. It is entirely different from purpose, which is the idea of a possible general regarded as desirable together with a sense of being determined in one's habitual nature (in one's *soul*, if you like the expression; it is *that part of our nature which takes general determinations of conduct*) to actualize it" (p. 76; 00073; emphasis added).

26. "The one intelligible theory of the universe is," Peirce claimed, "that of objective idealism, that matter is effete mind, inveterate *habits* becoming physical laws" (CP 6.25; emphasis added). The laws or "regularities of nature and of mind are regarded as products of growth," outcomes of an evolutionary process. They are emergent habits. Such an evolutionary cosmology is akin "to a Schelling-fashioned idealism which holds matter to be a mere specialized and partially deadened mind" (anything virtually incapable of losing its characteristic ways of acting and thus of acquiring new determinations of action) (CP 6.102). But such idealism might just as fairly or accurately be called an emergent naturalism.

27. In this connection, Peirce uses an even more arresting metaphor to capture what is operative here. In a dialogue between a critic and defender of pragmatism, Peirce has the defender respond to an objection ("I should think so passionate a lover of doubt would [like Descartes] make a clean sweep of his beliefs") by asserting: "You naturally would, holding an infant's mind to be a *tabula rasa* and the adult's a school slate, on which doubts are written with a soapstone pencil to be cleaned off with the dab of a wet sponge; but if they are marked with talc on 'man's glassy essence,' they may disappear for a long time only to be revived by a breath" (CP 5.519).

28. The relationship between generality and continuity needs to be explored more fully than I have done. In Peirce's thought, the intimacy of the relationship between the two, however, cannot be gainsaid (see. CP 1.82–84; also CP 6.185ff.).

29. "Reason . . . appeals to sentiment in the last resort. Sentiment on its side feels itself to be the man. That is my simple apology for philosophical sentimentalism" (CP 1.632). "It is the instincts, the sentiments, that make the substance of the soul [or psyche]. Cognition is only its surface, its locus of contact with what is external to it" (CP 1.628). "Instinct [or innate disposition] is capable of development and growth—though by a movement which is slow in proportion in which it is vital. . . . And just as reasoning springs from experience, so the development of sentiment [and the growth of 'instinct'] arises from the soul's Inward and Outward Experience. Not only is it of the same nature as the development of cognition [that nature being the growth of complex signs]; but it chiefly takes place through the instrumentality of cognition. The soul's deeper parts can only be reached through its surface. In this way the eternal forms . . .

will by slow percolation gradually reach the very core of one's being; and will come to influence our lives . . ." (CP I.648).

30. "Here we are in this workaday world, little creatures, mere cells in a social organism itself a poor and little thing enough, and we must look to see what little and definite task our circumstances have set before our little strength to do. The performance of that task [at least, if conscientiously undertaken] will require us to draw upon all our powers, reason included. And in the doing of it we should chiefly depend not upon that department of the soul which is most superficial and fallible—I mean our reason—but upon that department that is deep and sure—which is instinct" or sentiment (CP I.647). "The dry light of intelligence is manifestly not sufficient to determine a great purpose; the whole man goes into it" (CP 7.186; cf. 7.595). The distinctively religious cast which Peirce gives to marking "duty at its proper finite figure" is evident when he claims: "All communion from mind to mind is through continuity of being. A man is capable of having assigned to him a role in the drama of creation, and so far as he loses himself in that role,—no matter how humble it may be—so far as he identifies himself with its Author" (CP 7.772). But this prompted him to distance himself from F. C. S. Schiller and William James's portrait of God as finite: Schiller "thinks a pragmatist god must be finite, as does James, we believe. It is evident that anthropomorphism and pragmatism are wedded; but Peirce and some of the others insist that a practical maxim involves the idea of the future, and that the idea of the future is an idea of the infinite, and therefore, that a finite god cannot satisfy human instinct" (MS 331).

31. "We experience vicissitudes, especially. We cannot experience the vicissitude without experiencing the perception which undergoes the change; but the concept of *experience* is broader than that of perception, and includes much that is not, strictly speaking, an object of *perception*. It is the compulsion, the absolute constraint upon us to think otherwise than we have been thinking that constitutes experience. Now constraint and compulsion cannot exist without resistance, and resistance is effort opposing change. Therefore there must be an element of effort in experience; and it is this which gives it [experience] its peculiar character" (CP I.336).

32. Two things are "all-important" for understanding self-control. "The first is that a person is not absolutely an individual. His thoughts are what he is 'saying to himself,' that is, saying to that *other* self that is just coming into life in the flow of time. When one reasons it is that critical self [that internalized *other*] that one is trying to persuade; and all thought whatsoever is a sign, and is mostly of the nature of language" (CP 5.421; emphasis added). In other words, the self as self is inclusive of the other as other: the reflexivity constitutive of selfhood embodies the apparent paradox of identity being secured and solidified by ongoing processes of identification with what continuously confronts the self, even in its deepest interiority, as other. The "I" is not the being who stands absolutely over against the other but rather the being who enacts its individuality by means of its engagement with alterity.

33. "I do not see why," Peirce wrote, "we should not retain Kant's term, critic, especially as he borrowed it from the English [cf. 6.205]; for in our language this word has been used since Hobbes and earlier, for the science of criticism, and was admitted by Johnson [in this sense] into his dictionary. The peculiar turn of meaning given to it by Kant, which makes it the critic of knowledge, or, as he would have said, the critic of the cognitive faculties, is quite admissible. Besides, the immense importance of Kant's work upon this problem imposes upon us [given the ethics of terminology] the duty of accepting his word, as long as it is so far from being a bad one" (CP 2.62; cf. CN III, 94–95).

34. “For him [Francis Bacon] man is nature’s interpreter; and in spite of the crudity of some anticipations, the idea of science is, in his mind, inseparably bound up with that of a life devoted to single-minded inquiry. That is also the way in which every scientific man thinks of science. . . . Science is to mean for us a mode of life whose single animating purpose is to find out the real truth, which pursues this purpose by a well considered method, founded on thorough acquaintance with such scientific results already ascertained by others as may be available, and which seeks cooperation in the hope that the truth may be found, if not by any of the actual inquirers, yet ultimately by those who come after them and who shall make use of their results” (CP 7.54).

35. Peirce insists, “the human mind and the human heart have a filiation to God” (CP 8.262). One of the ways in which he tries to illuminate this relationship is by proposing: “It is somehow more than a mere figure of speech to say that nature fecundates the mind of man with ideas which, when those ideas grow up, will resemble their father, Nature” (CP 5.591). The link or affinity between thought and being is here given a naturalistic twist, in several distinct senses of *naturalism*.

36. Peirce asserts, “‘rational’ means essentially self-criticizing, self-controlling and self-controlled, and therefore open to incessant question” (CP 7.77).

37. “We must not begin,” Peirce asserts, “by talking of pure ideas,—vagabond thoughts that tramp the road without any human habitation,—but must begin with *men and their conversation*. We are familiar with the *phenomenon of a man expressing an opinion*, sometimes decidedly, otherwise not. Perhaps it will be a mere suggestion, a mere question. Any such suggestion that may be expressed and understood relates to some common experience of the interlocutors, or, if there is a misunderstanding, they may think they refer to some common experience when, in fact, they refer to quite different experiences. A man reasoning with himself is liable to just such a misunderstanding” (CP 8.112; emphasis added). Elsewhere he suggests: “Different systems of expression are often of the greatest advantage” (EP 2, 264). This is perhaps nowhere more advantageous than in philosophy. In general, what will count as “ideal terminology will differ somewhat for different sciences. The case of philosophy is [however] very peculiar in that it has positive need of popular words in popular senses,—not as its own language (as it has too usually used those words), but *as objects of its study*” (EP 2, 264–65; emphasis added). In making such words and expressions objects of its study, philosophy is in effect treating them as phenomena, manifestations of what is other than themselves.

38. This is but a way of talking about deliberation in its distinctively pragmatist sense. In *Human Nature & Conduct*, John Dewey illuminates this process when he states: “deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action. It starts from the blocking of efficient overt action, due to that conflict of prior habit and newly released impulse. . . . Then each habit, each impulse, involved in the temporary suspense of overt action takes its turn in being tried out. Deliberation is [hence] an experiment in finding out what the various lines of possible action are really like” (MW 132; cf. CP 5.533).

39. The break with these conceptions of selfhood and agency opens the possibility of a return to what in some passages Peirce depicts as a Christian (or traditionally religious) portrait of self and agency. In MS 659, e.g., he insists: “a man’s Real Self consists in his Actual Existing Feelings, and not in the view he *would* take if his nature accomplished its proper development. The orthodox [Christian] view according to my and most other churches is, I believe, though perhaps I am in error, that an infant is Regenerate when his sponsors at the [baptismal] font have promised that his mind shall receive that Christian nurture which will insure his ultimately having the Feelings, at

least, and the valuations of Feelings that are about all that is common to all Christians" (however, see, MS 649, pp. 36–37). In light of Peirce's own ethics of terminology, it seems crucial to identify the self described in MS 659 as the *actual* self, and that in MS 649 as the *real* self.

40. The utterly straightforward and immediately plausible account of this capacity is clearly implied in Peirce's mature remarks on self-control: "there are inhibitions and coordinations that entirely escape consciousness [though these are the most rudimentary forms of self-control—somewhat paradoxically, forms of self-control operating in absence of self-consciousness]. There are, in the next place, modes of self-control which seem quite instinctive. Next, there is a kind of self-control which results from training. Next, a man can be his own training-master and thus control his self-control [though the manner and efficacy of the assumption of this role will depend much on how others reared and educated—i.e., 'trained'—the individual]. When this point is reached much or all the training may be conducted in imagination. When a man trains himself, thus controlling control, he must have some moral rule in view, however special and irrational it may be. But next he may undertake to improve this rule; that is, to exercise a control over his control of control. To do this he must have in view something higher than an irrational rule. He must have some sort of moral principle. *This, in turn, must be controlled by reference to an esthetic ideal of what is fine* [or beautiful or admirable or adorable]. There are certainly more grades than I have enumerated. Perhaps their number is indefinite. The brutes are certainly capable of more than one grade of control; and it seems to me that our superiority to them is more due to our greater number of grades of self-control than it is to our versatility" (CP 5.533; emphasis added).

41. In a letter to William James (July 23, 1905), Peirce identifies the admirable with the adorable in its original sense and thereby connects the esthetic ideal with traditional theism: "anthropomorphism [a doctrine he endorses] implies for me above all that the true Ideal is a living power, which is a variation of the ontological proof. . . . That is, the esthetic ideal, that which we *all* love and adore, the altogether admirable, has, as ideal, necessarily a mode of being to be called living. Because our ideas of the infinite are necessarily extremely vague and become contradictory the moment we attempt to make them precise. But still they are not utterly unmeaning [or nonsensical], though they can only be interpreted in our religious adoration and the consequent effects upon conduct. This I think is good sound solid strong pragmatism. Now the Ideal is not a finite existent. Moreover, the human mind and the human heart have a filiation to God. That to me is a most comfortable [comforting?] doctrine. At least I find it most wonderfully so every day in contemplating my misdeeds and shortcomings" (CP 8.262).

42. It is extremely curious that most discussions of Peirce (see, e.g., Karl-Otto Apel and C. P. Christensen) in which he is cast as a transcendental philosopher (or simply one engaged in constructing transcendental arguments of a more or less clearly Kantian form) hardly ever note Peirce's explicit misgivings about this mode of argumentation (see, e.g., CP 2.32ff). Moreover, many of these commentators unquestionably assume the validity of this mode of argumentation. This is however hardly a critical approach to the critical project itself. In "The Validity of Transcendental Arguments," Charles Taylor notes: such arguments "turn out to be quite paradoxical things." He adds: "They prove something quite strong about the subject of experience and the subject's place in the world; and yet since they are [themselves] grounded in experience, there remains an ultimate, ontological question they can't foreclose—for Kant, that of the things in themselves. . ." (1995, 33). At the very least, the inherent limitations and questionable

validity of transcendental arguments suggest, to this Peircean at least, deep problems with the transcendental reading of the Peircean project. Rather than intending to foreclose the question of noumena, Peirce strove to open this question in a manner undercutting any radical disjunction between appearance and reality. So, against expositors like Apel and Christensen, but with ones like Klaus Oehler and Cheryl Misak, I tend to read Peirce's pragmatism as a way of taking a turn other than the transcendental turn. The recovery of the somatic, social, historical agent who undertakes the actual business of deliberative conduct is central to the pragmatist turn. And practical identity is at the heart of any adequate recovery of human agency, humanly conceived.

Copyright of Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society is the property of Indiana University Press and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.